cells are not at first separated by any intermediate membrane, and their protoplasm is directly continuous; so that, looking at things only by their first appearance, M. Gerbe might really be justified in thinking that he had under his eyes a small ovum with two lobes, each containing a vesicular nucleus in a common vitelline mass. But the illusion is no longer possible when these bodies have passed to a more advanced stage. In fact a transverse membranous septum is soon formed between the two adherent daughter cells, and separates their contents. This septum is visibly continuous with the line of the outer contour of the two cells, and consequently cannot be interpreted otherwise than as an internal prolongation of the enveloping membrane, which was originally common to them. Thus I cannot share in the opinion of M. van Beneden, who denies a cell-membrane to the young ovules. It is by means of this median septum, which, instead of splitting, and thus permitting the separation of the two ovules, remains simple, that the latter are, so to speak, soldered together. This splitting only takes place much later, when one of the two united cells, having alone continued its development, becomes transformed into a mature ovum, as described by M. van Beneden. We still see, for a longer or shorter time, at the surface of this ovum, the ovule which has remained stationary in its development in the form of a small rounded prominence; but this is detached when the ovum quits its follicle to pass into the oviferous pouch. It was by following the gradual development of this ovum that M. van Beneden ascertained that the supposed cicatricula with which M. Gerbe had endowed it was nothing but the little sister cell adhering to it, and that the cellular nucleus which the same observer supposed to exist at the centre of this cicatricula was only the nucleus of this same cell. We arrive at a similar demonstration by the mechanical means which enable us to separate these two bodies. Thus by rolling the ovum carefully under a thin glass cover, we sometimes succeed in detaching from it the little ovule, which, as soon as it is free, resumes its original spheroidal form. The same result is also sometimes obtained by the action of chemical substances, which cause the contraction of the protoplasm, by the tendency of the little ovule to acquire a rounded form under the influence of those reagents.—*Comptes Rendus*, December 20, 1869, tome lxix. pp. 1320–1324.

On some Mammalia from Eastern Thibet.

By M. A. Milne-Edwards.

Two monkeys inhabit the coldest and least accessible forests of eastern Thibet. One is a *Macacus*, allied to *M. speciosus* and *M. tcheliensis*, in which the tail is very short. Its coat is of a dark greyish brown; the hairs, which are very long and thick, present no differently coloured bands; the lower parts of the body are of a much lighter grey, and the face and hands are flesh-coloured. The species is named *M. thibetanus*.

The second species is a *Semnopithecus*, named *S. roxellana* by the

author. It is distinguished by its very long and thick coat, the hairs of which are grey at their base and silvery yellow towards the point; the latter colour predominates on the limbs, the belly, and the sides of the face, and is mingled with a very brilliant red tinge on the frontal region. The upper margin of the nostrils is much developed, forming a true nose.

Two species of Insectivora form the types of new genera. One of these seems to be a transition form between the Desmans and the Shrews; like the former it has the posterior feet dilated into natatory pallets, and its tail is long and laterally compressed; but its snout is short, and its teeth resemble those of *Sorex*. It has sixteen teeth in the upper and twelve in the lower jaw. To this animal the author gives the name of *Nectogale elegans*. The second form is nearly allied to the Shrews, but is distinguished by having scaly feet and a tail so short as to be concealed by the hairs; it has only twenty-four teeth, twelve above and twelve below. For this genus the author proposes the name of *Anourosorex*. A mole, named *Talpa longirostris*, is characterized by its very elongated muzzle, which gives it a certain resemblance to the Japanese *T. moogura*. The latter has only six inferior incisors; the new Thibetan species has eight.

The most interesting animal is one called by the Abbé David *Ursus melanoleucus*. The author states that it is not a bear, although resembling one in its external appearance, but in its osteological and dentary characters it approaches the Pandas (*Ailurus*) and Raccoons. It forms a new genus, for which the name of *Ailuropoda* is proposed. The author also notices a fine Flying Squirrel, which has the head and breast covered with a mixture of bright-red and white hairs. He names it *Pteromys alborufus*.—*Comptes Rendus*, February 14, 1870, tome lxx. pp. 341–342.

On the Transformation of the Nests of the House-Martin (Hirundo urbica, *Linn.*). By M. A. Pouchet.

M. Pouchet has noticed a change in the design of the nests of the common House-Martin, which he says has been effected within the last forty years, and the observation of which leads him to think that the notion of the exact persistence of the same mode of nest-building is by no means so certain as has generally been supposed. He refers to several instances in which we may presume that a change took place on the birds of certain species quitting the open country and coming to take up their abode among human habitations.

With regard to the House-Martin, M. Pouchet states that, having procured some nests in order to draw them, he was surprised to find that they differed considerably from those which he had collected forty years ago, and which are still preserved in the Museum at Rouen. A reference to published figures of the Martin's nest furnished further evidence of the same kind.

The nests of the older form are hollow quarters of hemispheres applied by three sections to the embrasures of windows or to the